

[The Orchid Beauty Shop]

[?]

Feb.1-1919

[Finished?], Feb. 6-[39?]

The Orchid Beauty Shop

144 1/2 Clayton Street

Athens, Georgia.

Where Beauty is Assured.

Owned by Miss [Farrie Emerick?] and Miss Edna Seagraves.

When I opened the door of the Orchid Beauty Shop. I was greeted by the [?] two [operators?] in their freshly laundered orchid uniforms, with a cheerful “ Good morning, [?] what can we do for you?.

I explained my visit, [and?] asked if they would be kind enough to tell something about their business and how they run their shop? They answered with a pleasant grin, and said, business has ‘Gone With the Wind.’ But we will tell you about our shop. But stay around with us for a while and you will see how the day of a beauty operator goes.

WE open at nine A.M. [and?] close at five thirty, except on Mondays and Friday evenings, when we stay open late for the benefit of the girls that work and can't get here during the day. And we are usually very busy on these evenings, for we have a good many customers among the business girls.

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Our work is not so easy as most people think it is, # for it keeps you [on?] your feet all day, # except for the time that it takes to give a manicure. Yet we like our work, # for we meet so many new people, # as well as our regular customer. And we do have such nice customers [!#?] it is a pleasure to wait on them. # We each have our special customers that call for us, but if either of us are busy and they run in without an appointment, they are good sports, and will let the first that can get to them do the work.

And we have customers from out of town also, in fact we get a good business from the small towns. # We like our customers [and?] appreciate them. [?] when they keep coming back to us, [#?] then we feel like that we have been able to please them. And we also have quite [a?] few men among our customers, # for more [men?] patronize the beauty shops than you would think. All of our customers 2 seem to like our shop, # and come to see us, # even if they don't need any [?] work done. And one, # the daughter of a banker sayss says that when she opens the door of our shop that it is just like coming into a friendly home.

The door opened, # and a girl came in saying, # did you ever know me to be on time, # I am late as [?] usual and in a hurry to catch the bus to Atlanta, [#?] as I am going home today. Can you fix me in time? “ A Assuring her that she would be ready in plenty of time, one of the operators started to getting her ready for a shampoo, # set and manicure.

As she [washed?] her head, [#?] they carried on a friendly conversation. And the other operator said # ” how do you like our color scheme in our shop? I looked around the shop [and?] noticing that the dressing tables and chairs [cabinets?] , as well as cushions were all done in orchid and black. It was lovely and I said so, and asked here what gave them the idea for that color scheme?

She laughed and said, “well I [hardly?] know or remember now, But back in the first of [1933?] when I was planing for a shop of my own, I decided that I would use these colors. I went to Molors Beauty College in Atlanta Ga. After finishing the course there, I went to

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Thomaston Ga. and run a shop for a woman there over a year. Then the death of my step-mother brought me home.

"After that I was needed at home, [#?] and could not go back to my work. I worked [at?] home giving shampoos, finger waves [?] [and?] some permanents waves, I had an old machine. Then one of my friends completed [a?] [#?] beauty course, [and?] we decided to open a shop of our own. We rented this place, or at least [?] [od?] [of?] it, for \$10. a month.

"Neither of , us had any money, [#?] and it was a job to plan to go in business. My brother is a [cabinetmaker?], [#?] and he make our tables, [#?] chairs, [#?] supply cabinets as well [?] as our display cabinets. We did the painting ourselves. [and?] how we worked to get things just as we wanted them . ! But as I have all ways heard, # where there is a will, # there is a way, # and even before we were [ready?] 3 for our formal[,?] opening, mu my customers that I had been waiting on, were coming to the shop [begging?] us to do their work.

"It was on May the fourth, [#?] 1933, [#?] that we had our formal opening. We did no work on that day, just [#?] intertained our friends, [#?] and served ice cream and cake. She laughed and said, [#?] "and it was what you call home-made at that, [#?] for we baked the cakes, [#?] made the cream, [#?] and of course the furniture was made by my brother. But we are still using them, [#?] and they look as well as you will find in any beauty shop.

" Our other equipment consisted of one old shampoo outfit, [#?] an old model dryer, [#?] and my old permanent waving machine. We borrowed fifty dollars to make a payment down on a new machine, but of course it did not get here in time for our formal opening. Our friends remembered us with flowers, every table, [#?] windows, [#?] and most of the floor space was filled with baskets and vases of the most gorgeous spring flowers. It was a happy day for us.

" Oh, how [id?] we decide on the name? Well a salesman did that. He was in getting orders for our supplies, [#?] while we was were painting, [#?] and he gave us many

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suggestions that were of a great help to us, [?#] as well as the name for our shop[.?] we were discussing a name, [?#] and he said, [?#] "with your color scheme, [?#] I can't see how you can very well call it anything else except, The Orchid Shop, [?#] so he was the one that really named it.

"It was a hard pull for us, [?#] for we had so , many expenses, [?#] and of course we also had to live on what what we made. But we [worked?] hard, [?#] built up a good trade, [?#] and in December of the same year, [?#] we had to have another operator. And that is when Miss Richards came with us. [?#] And she has been here since that time. She bought an interest in the shop, [?#] and the three of us owned it together. And you want to know how we managed about the salary? well, there was [?] three of us. [?#] we [devided?] [divided?] the money in fourths [?#] the [?] fourth was for the shop. [?#] And the other for us. Some times we had to put more in for the shop, [?#] but we [devided?] [divided?] our salary even between us. "But now we have a very modern shop equiped

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"But now we have a very modern shop, [?#] equiped with all the very latest equipment. We traded in all of the old machines for new ones, and we keep up with the new equipments, [?#] as well as attend all the beauty show, [?#] for that is something that is necessary to keep up with the new ideas and different styles in our line of work. Miss Richards and I own the shop now, as the girl [that?] went in with me at the beginning, [?#] has married and left town the first of this year. We bought out her part of the shop. [?#] yes , we really miss her, [?#] but as business is dull now we are able to manage without haveing having any one else at the present time.

Two more customers came in, and she excused herself to wait on [them?]. The telephone was continuously ringing [.#?] it was customers [??] making appointments for the week end, [?#] and especially for Friday evening. As I looked around the shop from where I was sitting a very comfortable chair near the circulating heater which furnished the [?] for the shop, [?#] and made it very comfortable.

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The reception room was *1 furnished [very simple*1], but comfortable, [#?] an overstuffed [settee?] took up one side of the room, and the telephone sit on a small table at one end [of?] the [settee?]. By the large Double windows was the very modern manicure table on rollers, [#?] so that it can be be rolled over to the dryers, then [?] the customers can [?] get their manicure , while their hair is drying and saves time on them. The dryers are of the The latest type of Hoffman dryers with comfortable arm chairs under each [????] ARM CHAIRS under each dryer [??] . At one side is a magazine rack with all the [?] latest [?] papers and magaxines magazines in it. The reception room is seperated separated from the other room by an archway, and I had a good veiww view of the room, It contained three [dressing?] tables; two of them were placed together, and a long mirrow mirror went over both of the tables. By the [?] [?] windows was a small table with a radio on it. At the other table was a large regular barber chair for cutting hair.

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The Shampoo basin and [?] comfortable reclining chair, [#?] was at one side of the room. On one side of it was a table of shampoo solutions and [rinses?] also a small cabinet for [twoels] [towels?] . On the other side was a large cabinet with towels and shampoo aprons. On the top of it was bottles of finger waving solutions. It was all very clean and attractive. The permanent waving machine was in one corner of the room, [#?] also a small dryer.

The two dressing table with the large mirrow mirro, had small shelves on e each side [#?] these were filled with the different kinds of cosmetics that are used in their work. There was [?] also curling irons that are used for [marcel?] waves. Everything was placed where it was convenient for operators, [#?] as well as the customers.

The girl that [?] was in a hurry to get her [?] bus out of town, came and sit sat down near me, and said[,?] She still had a few minutes and she would cool off a little before she went out in the cold. I do like to come here, they are so nice and friendly with every one. And then to they do such grand work. I fell like that I am just right when they get through with

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me. But I must get out or I will miss my bus, [#?] telling the operators good bye, [#?] and thanking them for their good wishes for a very pleasant visit, she was gone.

As they fixed the last two customers under the dryers, [#?] the door opened and a woman came in, with one arm in a sling. They seemed very happy to see her, [#?] and as they removed her coat and hat for her, told her how they had missed her, [#?] and were so glad that was able to be out again. She was early for her appointment, [#?] and said she wanted to rest for a while. The pulled a chair near the heater, and placed a cushion for her arm to rest on before they went back to their other customers.

They customer said to me, [?] "Aren't they nice, but then they are nice to every one. Why we can send our children down here and never worry about how they will get the work done. For they can do more with the children 6 especially in giving them a permanent, [#?] than we can, and the children all like them.

The two ladies were out from under the dryers, [#?] and after their hair had been combed for them they went out. A very young girl, dressed in a dark wine colored suit came in. She didn't have an appointment, but wanted to know [if?] they could give her a shampoo, set, and manicure, as she had to go to a party that evening.

They told her that they could, and one if them gave her a shampoo, while the other one gave the woman with a broken arm a hot oil treatment. [A?] they was busy with them a woman came in and told them that she was expecting her son to meet her there after school, and she had some more shopping to do, [and?] if he came before she got back, [#?] to tell him to wait on her.

As the young girl was placed under the dryer, [#?] the manicure table was rolled in front of her, [#?] and by the time her hair was [dry?], [?] the manicure was finished, and she was ready to [go?]. The other customer was given a manicure while she was under the dryer also, and they used great care in working on the hand on the arm that was broken. As she went out they said, [?] "how about lunch? Will you eat with us [?] we fix our lunch here

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in the shop. They laughed as I looked around, and siad said , come on we have another room that you haven't seen yet. “

They opened a door at one side of their work room, and we went in another large room. It was also done in orchid and black. It was another work room, as they called it. [It?] Had a shampoo basin, [#?] [dressing?] table and permanent waving machine. Also two large supply cabinets, [#? also one for their uniforms. As they [opened?] up these cabinets to show them to me, [#?] one was for solutions for their waves, [#?] as well as the pads that were used with it.

There supplies of every kind that is used in their work. And in 7 side of one of the cabinets, [#?] was a few dishes, [#?] pans, [#?] percolator, [#?] caned goods, crackers, [#?] bread, [#?] and things that would be easy to fix a lunch. And on a smal small table was [an?] electric plate and grill. I asked if I might get some [?] thing for the lunch also. They hesitated, [#?] and then said, well we would [?] like for you to just eat with us, but if you [???) had rather it will be alright [?] .

We planed planned what we were going to have. I went out and bought some barbecue barbecued meat. they made coffee, fixed [heated?] soup and toasted bread. When I got back with the meat they had fixed [?] a table near the fire, [#?] and every thing was ready. They didn't have any appointments for an hour, [#?] and as we ate our lunch, [#?] they talked about their work and their homes.

One of them said [#?] “we [do?] have such nice customers cutomers, [#?] and we try to be nice to them, [#?] and we will not use anything on them that we would not use on our ownelves. Some of the cheap solutions we do not have in our shop. [#?] We guarantee all of our work [#?] and to do this we have to know what we are using. Therfore Therefore we use only the best. Oh, yes ! [#?] We have had to turn down work [#?] on that account. But we will not give a cheap wave permanent. Some times it is alright, [#?] and then again it is not, [#?] and the hair will be ruined. It just does not pay.

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At first some of our customers could not understand this, [#?] but [?] after they tried the cheap work, [#?] and then our work, [#?] they didn't want any more of the cheap waves. And we have built up our business on our work. Our out - of - town customers that come to us[,?] are nice, [#?] they also want the best, and hardly a week passes that we do not have an invitation out to some of their [dances?] or parties. And when it is possible we accept these invitations for we really really enjoy them.

We both have to work hard, [#?] for we have to help support our familie families . My Fathers Father's health is bad, [#?] and I have my sister and her little girl to [?] help. I hope to be able to send her through school. I went through 8 [?????? ??] high school and then had to go to work. But My Daddy father sent all of us, [#?] my sister [and?] three brothers through high school, [#?] and I hope that I can at least [#?] do that much for my little neice niece . Her mother keeps house for us and looks after our Dad. But I have a very pleasent home, and we have our friends in for cards and dinner. And when I am at home in the day time I like to work in our flowers, [#?] for I like flowers of all kinds, and then it is not any trouble to get away for a day on Sundays in the car. And we very often do that.

Miss Richards has [lost her?] Father, [#?] and she and her brother are tryin trying to send their younger brothers through school. So you see we have our obligations to meet. But we very often go to a movie after we close the shop or play cards with our friends and some times with our customers. And our shop hours are such that we can get away for the week [#?] end in our car, and be back in time for work on Monday morning .

But the past month has been the worst on that we have had since we have been in business. Of course it is always dull right after [?] Christmas, [#?] but never so bad as the past month. Our busiest times are, just before Easter, [#?] for the ladies must have thier hair fixes for the new Easte Easter bonnet. And fall of the year is good. [#?] But the last week before Christma Christmas is when we are rushed to death.

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We also get quiet a bit of work from the school girls when they are planing for their dances and entertainments. And especially during the summer, for there is always something being planed for the summer school girls. But business is not what it use to be. One thing is because there [are?] so many beauty shops here. Athens is not large enough to support support them all. Yet I guess we do fairly well considering the dull season and so many shops, [#?] besides the operators that do this work in their homes.

We try to keep our prices in range with the other shops. But what hurts the shops, are is the operators in their homes. They do not have 9 the overhead expenses of a shop, and therefore can do the work so much cheaper than we can. And of course that helps the people that do not feell like they can go to a beauty shop.

Most of our work is done a cash basis, [?] but we have our charge accoun account for some of our regular customers, [#?] and it is not often that we lose any thing in this way. But we have lost a little[.?] that way. We have a good line of cosmetics that we can recommend to our customers, [#?] [and?] sell a great deal of it. But we do not recommend any that we would not use ourselves, [?] and our customers have confidence in what [we recomend recommend ?].

Yet after all, [#?] I guess we have made good with the start we had in the begining. For we [opened?] our shop on a credit, [#?] borrowing the money. And from just enough equipment for one booth, [#?] we have as you see three rooms well equipped with modern machines. Our rent has increased from the original \$10. to \$25[.?] a month. Our gas, electricity , and water are reasonable for the amount that we use.

WE have a maid that comes in and does the cleaning[,?] after she gets out of school. She is just a girl, [#?] but she is very smart, [and?] we hope later that we can keep her all the time. We only pay her a dollar a week, and some items more especially when she works all day on Saturday. But we help her with her clothes for school. She is well satisfied and wants to stay with us.

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As the old saying goes, [#?] we still count our pennies, for we put aside enough to take care of our shop, [#?] before we take any for ourselves. Of [?] course since there are only two of us, [#?] it will mean more each way. But when there was were three of us we seldom drew under \$16[.] or \$18[.] dollars ([????]) a week but some times it is less and some times it is more, but it all amounts to how much business we do. But as I said we still take care of the shop, and pay our bills promptly.

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We do not belong to any Union, and if there is one here we have never heard of it, [#?] and we keep in touch with all the other shops. During the summer, [#?] we cooperate with the other shops and the stores, [#?] by closing one afternoon during the week. And when there was three of us, [#?] then we each took one day a week off during the dull season. This gave us a rest, [#?] and also a chance to [?] any work that we might want to do at home.

And we will have to plan a little different this year for our vacations. We have each been taking two weeks off. But one [?] can't run the shop I guess we will have to just get some one to work while we take our vacations. But that is a long time off isn't it, [#?] and I guess that we had better get our dishes cleared up, [#?] for it is about time for appointments. And one of them is a young man.

It did [not take?] long to get our dishes washed up and put away. I had really really enjoyed the lunch and told them that I did. Miss Richards said, [?] we do this very often. [#?] of course when we are busy we [can't do] this [?] . But we enjoy it, [#?] and we are glad that you ate with us, [#?] instead of going out to lunch. Sometimes we have customers that like to eat with us. And they very often send us candy that they make, and some of our customers send us cakes, and they are delicious.

The door opened and [a man?] came in. I thought it would be the man customer. But [it?] was a salesman from one of the supply houses. They asked him why he was late, [#?] that

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he should have been here two days before , that they couldn't wait, [#?] and had already ordered. He laughed [and?] said, “ well I am sure the order went into our house just the same. [#?] For I know what you girls use, [#?] and we are the only people that carry the best. “ They laughed but admitted the order went to his house. He talked a few minute minutes then thanking them for the order, He [went?] out.

Miss Goss said , ” he was right at that, [#?] we get what we think is our very best solution from him. But we also ge supplies from Atlanta, Il and South Carolina [?] Also. And there is hardly a day passes that we do not have a representative from one of the supply houses. It is not often that they let us have to send the order ourself. “

As she finished talking two customers came in, [#?] and one of them was a man. I was very anixous anxious to see what work he would have done. He had a shampoo and manicure,and was quiet quite particular about a manicure. More so than any of the ladies had been especially about the polish. After he had left the other custoker made a comment on seeing a man in a beauty shop. The operators told her that they had several regular customers among the men.

Everyone that cmae came in the shop seemed very much at home, [#?] and [?] there was a friendly conversation among them all. The lady came back to meet her son. He came in and showed his report card to them all. It was a very good report and he was congratulated on it. His mother said she was afraid [#?] that it wouldn't be so good this time, [#?] as he had lost so much time while he was sick. They went out to finish their [shoopng?], leaving his books in the shop.

The telephone rang[,?] [?] one of the operators answered , [#?] and [?] said, “I am sorry but I will not be able to take any more appointments for today. would you like to come tomorrow? “ That was evidently agreeable, [#?] for she said, “ al all [#?] right I will put you [down?] for nine thirty 9:30 in the morning. Turning to me she said I hated to [do that?] [#?]

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but we do not take more than we can take care of, [#?] and I don't feel that people like to sit around and wait. [#?] It is to tiresome. “

As she waited for her customer to get her hair dried, [#?] she said,” we are going out to [a?] bridge party to night, [#?] and know that we will enjoy it. And this week end we are going out to an old country square dance. [?] You should go with us sometimes to one of these, [#?] for you would enjoy it. We work hard, but we also like to get out and enjoy life. And I think every 12 one should get a little pleasure as as work. “

I knew that they would have no more time for me, [#?] as it would keep them busy until it was time for them to close their shop. And I [thanked?] them for the story and for the pleasure of having lunch with them. Telling me [?] - bye they said come back to see us again. We have been glad to have you with us. “